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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/344,190	06/24/1999	KENNETH SCOTT KUMP	15-XZ-4971	8765

7590

06/14/2002

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EXAMINER

CHOOBIN, BARRY

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2621

DATE MAILED: 06/14/2002

6

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/344,190

Applicant(s)
Kump

Examiner
Choobin Barry

Art Unit
2621



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Apr 12, 2002
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 35 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3-12, and 15-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3-12, and 15-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirements.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

Art Unit: 2621

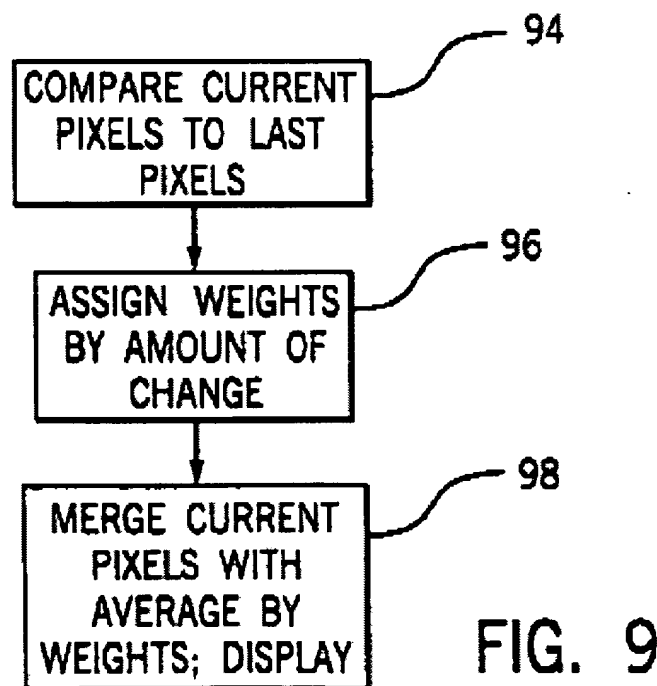
DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed April 12, 2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues prior art fails to teach or suggest calculating a dynamic range.

The Examiner disagrees. Ergun et al disclose in Fig.9, step 94 and step 96 corresponding a dynamic range.



Applicant argues prior art fails to teach or suggest a segmentation module.

Art Unit: 2621

The Examiner disagrees. Ergun et al disclose for example at column 2, lines 56-59 and Fig.7 wherein determining which portions of the image represent the image object corresponds to segmentation module.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

3. Claims 1,3-12 and 15-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ergun et al (U.S. Patent 6,298,109) .

As to claim 1, Ergun et al disclose a method for determining a dynamic range of a digital medical image for a medical imaging system, the digital medical image containing a clinical region, comprising:

dividing a digital medical image into at least two bands of predetermined width (refer for example to Fig.19);

determining whether the digital medical image within said at least two bands includes at least one non-clinical region (column 2, lines 43-46 wherein control of the exposure of the imaged object based only on the portion of the image attenuated by the object is provided corresponding to non clinical image region); and calculating a dynamic range for a clinical region (column 4, lines 40-

Art Unit: 2621

45, Fig.6 and column 7, lines 41-66 wherein the CCD 84 provides a complete set of radiation data for an entire image 86 (a frame) periodically once every "frame interval" so that real time image of a patient placed within X-ray beam 80 may be obtained, corresponding to calculating a dynamic region in this portion of claim).

As to claim 3, Ergun et al disclose the digital medical image is divided into one horizontal and vertical bands (column 11, lines 13-32 and Fig. 19).

As to claim 4, Ergun et al disclose differentiating said digital medical image, said determining step calculating a position of the non clinical region based, on a result of said differentiation (column 11, lines 33-53 and Fig.9 and Fig.11).

As to claim 5, Ergun et al disclose calculating at least one threshold based on a dynamic range of the digital medical image, said at least one threshold being used to identify at least one of maximum and minimum values for the non-clinical region (column 11, lines 53-60 and column 12, line 59- column 13, line 3).

As to claim 6, Ergun et al disclose determining step discriminates at least one of histogram maximum and minimum values for a non-clinical region based on at least one predetermined threshold (column 12, line 59 through column 13, line 3).

As to claims 7 and 8, Ergun et al disclose masking non-clinical regions based on at least one of gray scale maximum and minimum values for the non clinical region (refer for example to column 16, lines 28-40 wherein the image 208 is then used to derive a scatter map. Referring to FIG. 23, generally the amount of scatter at a given point will be a function of how many x-ray

Art Unit: 2621

photons are received at points adjacent to the given point. For example, comparing the image 208 to a theoretical scatterless image 228 generally in an attenuated region 230 of the image 208 (e.g., under the spine 200), scatter will increase the apparent value in the image 208 as a result of radiation from nearby low attenuation regions scattering into the high attenuation region 230. Conversely the apparent value at a low attenuation region 232 will be decreased because of the scatter into the high 5 attenuation region).

As to claim 9, Ergun et al disclose generating a histogram of the digital medical image, said masking step masking gray scale levels from the histogram that exceed predetermined upper and lower thresholds (column 11, lines 33-53).

As to claim 11, Ergun et al disclose a medical diagnostic imaging system for controlling a dynamic range of a digital medical image to be displayed, comprising: a segmentation module identifying clinical and non-clinical region within a digital medical image, said non-clinical regions comprising at least a collimated region (refer for example to column 16, lines 28-40 wherein the image 208 is then used to derive a scatter map. Referring to FIG. 23, generally the amount of scatter at a given point will be a function of how many x-ray photons are received at points adjacent to the given point. For example, comparing the image 208 to a theoretical scatterless image 228 generally in an attenuated region 230 of the image 208 (e.g., under the spine 200), scatter will increase the apparent value in the image 208 as a result of radiation from nearby low attenuation regions scattering into the high attenuation region 230. Conversely the apparent value at a low attenuation region 232 will be decreased

Art Unit: 2621

because of the scatter into the high 5 attenuation region .); and a dynamic range module determining a dynamic range of a clinical region of the digital medical image once the non-clinical region is segmented (see claim 1)).

As to claim 15, Ergun et al disclose segmentation module identifies non-clinical regions based on variations in gray scale levels of the digital medical image (column 11, lines 13-32 and Fig.13).

As to claims 17 and 18, Ergun et al disclose the segmentation module discriminates the non-clinical region based on at least one gray scale threshold value (column 11, lines 53-60 wherein thresholding process or subtraction disclosed in reference to background pixels).

Claims 10,12,16,19,20-27 are similarly analyzed and rejected.

Conclusion

4. THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Art Unit: 2621

CONTACT INFORMATION

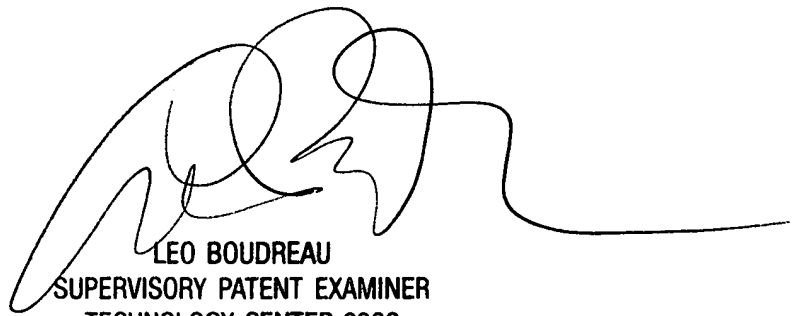
Any inquiry concerning this communication from the examiner should be directed to Barry Choobin whose telephone number is (703) 306-5787.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. If attempts to reach examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Leo Boudreau can be reached at (703) 305-4706.

Any response to this action should be mailed to: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks Washington, D.C. 20231. or faxed to: (703) 872-9314, (for formal communications intended for entry), (703) 308-5397 (for informal or draft communications, please label "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT"). Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA., Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group Receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

Barry Choobin
Patent Examiner
Group Art Unit 2621
June 6, 2002



LEO BOUDREAU
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600